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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, June 21, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Household Questions." Information from the Bureau of Entomology and the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Right in the middle of a quiet evening last night, Uncle Ebenezer looked up from his paper and said:

"Silas, I'll bet you that you can't guess what Aunt Sammy is reading so quietly over there in the corner?"

"How much do you bet?" inquired Uncle Silas.

"Oh, I'll bet you an ice cream soda, if you like."

"A chocolate soda?" (Uncle Silas is very fond of chocolate.)

"Yes, or any kind you prefer."

"Good. Your bet is taken, Ebenezer. I'll wager Aunt Sammy is reading a bulletin."

"Of course, Silas. But what's the bulletin about?"

"Oh, that wasn't in the bargain."

"Yes, it was. You have to tell me what she's reading about if you want your chocolate soda."

"I maintain that I'm being treated unfairly, that this was a gentleman's agreement. But just to show that I'm a sport, I'll bet that she's reading a bulletin on canning and preserving. I've been smelling strawberry jam all day."

"Hurrah," said Uncle Ebenezer. "I win, Silas. I get the soda after all. My bet is that Aunt Sammy is reading a bulletin on house flies. And tomorrow she'll be telling her radio friends how to fight the fly. Just wait."

"How did you know?" I asked Uncle Ebenezer.

"My dear Aunt Sammy. Don't you know that I have long been an admirer of Sherlock Holmes. Don't you know that though I am getting on in years I still can follow clues. Silas here counted on the smell of strawberry jam as a clue. But I observed that you came back from town this afternoon with two sturdy new fly swatters."

Uncle Ebenezer was right. I was reading a bulletin telling people how to get rid of flies.

"Now, Aunt Sammy," continued Uncle Ebenezer. "I hope you're in a poetic frame of mind. Please say 'yes' for I have a little poetry I'd like to recite to you. It's instructive poetry, of course, or I wouldn't be repeating it. It's educational like that bulletin. And it has moral. And--"

"Go on," said Uncle Silas, in his grumpiest voice. He was taking the loss of the soda hard." Go on. Recite your piece. We're listening."

Uncle Ebenezer stood up and recited with gestures:

"When in the good old summertime,
Which singers sing and rhymers rhyme,
I sit at peace with all mankind,
With nothing much upon my mind
And very little on my skin,
Those horrid houseflies start right in.
They come from stables and from worse
To boost the business of the hearse.
They come from garbage heaps and such,
Defiling everything they touch,
With germs to slay our wives and widdies,
Our granddads and our pretty kiddies.
Yea, many men have chills and itch,
Have glanders, pip and limbs that twitch,
And many little children die,
Because we fail to swat the fly.
Let's smite the critter for his sins,
His wives, his triplets and his twins,
For all we miss will pull their freight,
Go off somewhere and propogate."

All this is just by way of suggesting that if your household is troubled by flies in summer, there are things to do about it. I refer you to that bulletin I was reading last night. You're welcome to a copy if you'd like one. The name of the bulletin is "The House Fly and How to Suppress It." You can order it by name or number. The number is 1408. Write to this station or direct to the Dept. of Agriculture at Washington, D. C.

I don't know whether Uncle Ebenezer has any verses about mosquitoes or not. But speaking of flies, reminds me of mosquitoes and all the other summer pests. Yes, there's a bulletin on mosquitoes. It's called "Mosquito Remedies and Preventives." Its number is 1570.

By the way, of course you know that mosquitoes breed in swamps and stagnant water. But did you know that it takes only a very little bit of water to produce a big family of mosquitoes? The scientists say that "a little rain water in an old tin can, an uncared for sewer trap or an undrained roof gutter, if neglected, can supply mosquitoes for a neighborhood." What to do about them? The bulletin will tell you.

A lady in Syracuse wrote lately to ask how to get the sizing or starch out of new material. She has some fabric with a linen finish and she says the more she washes it, the stiffer it seems to get.

Here's what Miss O'Brien of the division of textiles and clothing at the Bureau of Home Economics replies:

"It is usually sufficient to boil such material for from 10 to 20 minutes. Sometimes several rinsings in very hot or boiling water are necessary to get out all the starch.

"However, boiling water injures some materials. In this case, there are certain destarching agents to use. Laundry authorities sometimes recommend malt extract for the purpose. Most drug stores carry this material. As soap or any alkali destroys the action of the malt, rinse the material in water before you apply it."

One more question. This is from a bride,

"Dear Aunt Sammy: How can I keep berry pies from running over in the oven?"

There's a question for the Recipe Lady to answer. She suggests four ways to prevent this difficulty with berry pies, cherry pies or any other juicy fruit pie.

"Whenever you are making a pie with a juicy filling, it's best to bake the lower crust by itself first," she advises. "Then the crust won't get soaked and soggy. Next, there's a point about the fruit filling. Cook that separately and thicken the juice a little before you put it into your pie. See here. Here's my recipe for cherry pie. I simmer the cherries five minutes and then drain off the juice. When the juice has cooled, I thicken it with just the right amount of cornstarch, never too much. Then I mix the cherries, the sugar and the thickened juice all together and put this filling in on top of the baked lower crust.

"Then there's a trick to the way you put on the top crust, that seals up the edge of the pie and keeps the juice from getting out there. You fold or tuck the edge of the top crust right in under the edge of the lower crust all the way around the pie just the way the tuck the sheets in around the mattress. And then press the crusts together firmly.

"Finally," said the Recipe Lady, "be careful not to have your oven too hot. Since you've already cooked the fruit, it doesn't need to boil again inside the pie. Just have your oven hot enough to bake the top crust, but not hot enough to let the filling boil and bubble underneath."

The Recipe Lady suggested also that I tell this bride to read page 103 in the green cookbook which gives the secrets about perfect pie crust; and then to follow the directions on page 105 for cherry pie. These directions hold also for berry pie.

Wednesday: "Cool Drinks for Hot Days."

